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Summary record of the 2nd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 10 June 2009, at 9:30 a.m.

Chairperson: Mr. McNee (Canada) ..... (Canada)
later: Ms. Bangura (Co-Chairperson) ..... (Sierra Leone)
later: Mr. McNee ..... (Canada)

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The meeting was called to order at 9.40 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda (PBC/3/SLE/5)

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

High-level special session

2. **The Chairperson** recalled that the objectives of the high-level special session were to galvanize political support for Sierra Leone's Agenda for Change and the political parties' joint communiqué; to mobilize support for the implementation of the United Nations joint vision for Sierra Leone and launch the United Nations Multi-Donor Trust Fund; to broaden Sierra Leone's network of partners; and to enhance the coordination and coherence of international support for Sierra Leone's peace consolidation efforts in line with the Agenda for Change.

3. *A short video featuring "Voices for Peace", a youth group from Sierra Leone, was shown.*

4. **The Chairperson** commended the Government of Sierra Leone for its leadership and vision in the development of the Agenda for Change as a road map for continued action towards peace and development.

Address by Mr. Ernest Bai Koroma, President of Sierra Leone

5. **Mr. Koroma** (President of Sierra Leone), speaking via video link from Freetown, said that the Commission played a vital role in helping post-conflict States make the difficult transition from war to peace. Immediately following his election to the Presidency in 2007, he had created the Agenda for Change, whose four priority areas — agriculture, transportation, energy resources and human development — were key to lifting Sierra Leone out of poverty and symbolized the Government's determination to take a production- and employment-oriented approach to poverty reduction and socio-economic transformation.

6. Meeting the goals of the Agenda for Change required a robust partnership with the private sector; the Government had therefore put in place policies and legislation to boost private sector activity and to improve governance of private companies. Steps were also being taken to promote human rights; combat corruption and drug trafficking; and carry out public sector reform. As for environmental sustainability, the Government of Sierra Leone had recently launched the Gola Forest Peace Park and was continuing to work with development partners to protect the environment; in addition, it hoped to leverage potential benefits from carbon-trading schemes in order to fund related activities.

7. While much progress had been made, significant challenges remained, such as the policing of borders to prevent the use of Sierra Leone as a transit country by drug cartels. Mechanisms had been established to prevent disputes between political parties from disturbing peace within the country. In that connection, he expressed appreciation to the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General for facilitating the signing of the joint communiqué between the two major political parties in Sierra Leone in order to advance peace and tolerance.

8. The current high-level session coincided with major shifts in the global economy. Fragile economies were especially vulnerable to global economic trends, and Sierra Leone was currently experiencing the adverse effects of the downturn, despite the Government's stabilization efforts. He trusted that the current crisis would not negatively affect mobilization of support for the implementation of his Government's Agenda for Change and the United Nations joint vision for Sierra Leone. He urged the members of the Commission to increase investments in his country, to diversify Sierra Leone's donor base and to advertise its potential. Specifically, he appealed to the Commission to realign its assistance with the Agenda for Change, in accordance with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, thus heralding a new era of Government-donor partnerships driven by Government priorities. Sierra Leone was also in the process of creating a National Youth Commission as a vehicle of the aspirations of youth in Sierra Leone; he would welcome the Commission's support in that regard. Finally, his Government supported the Commission's decision to launch the United Nations Multi-Donor Trust Fund with a view to fully implementing his Government's Agenda for Change and the United Nations joint vision for Sierra Leone.

Address by the Secretary-General

9. **The Secretary-General** congratulated the people and Government of Sierra Leone and the Commission on their impressive partnership over the past three years. Despite the remarkable progress made thus far, the country's situation remained fragile. Referring to

the recent outbreak of political violence, he commended the people and Government of Sierra Leone for rising above differences and overcoming the crisis; the adoption of the joint communiqué had renewed hope in Sierra Leone's journey towards peace and prosperity and was an example worthy of emulation by other countries in the subregion experiencing similar disturbances. The United Nations stood ready to continue supporting implementation of the joint communiqué, including through emergency resources from the Peacebuilding Fund.

10. The Agenda for Change represented an ambitious blueprint for reform, progress and development. Fulfilling its commitments required teamwork and a sense of national unity, as well as continued support from the international community, including the United Nations. Further progress must be made in addressing the root causes of conflict, strengthening democratic institutions and promoting economic and social development. He looked forward to Sierra Leone's continued work with the Commission in that regard. He welcomed the development of the United Nations joint vision in support of the Agenda for Change and encouraged all members of the Commission to provide the necessary resources and support for its implementation. Recognizing that the challenges facing Sierra Leone were closely linked to developments in the subregion, he said that the United Nations would continue to support the strengthening of subregional cooperation and institutions such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Mano River Union.

11. **Ms. Bangura** (Sierra Leone) said that her Government was committed to doing its part to ensure the success of the Sierra Leone country-specific configuration and thus vindicate the collective decision to establish the Peacebuilding Commission. The Agenda for Change launched by the President of Sierra Leone focused primarily on the link between security and youth unemployment. Indeed, the latter continued to contribute significantly to instability in the Mano River Basin. The Government welcomed the support demonstrated by Sierra Leone's development partners for the Agenda for Change as a clear signal of their commitment to the principles of national ownership and sustainability. Likewise, she welcomed the launching of the Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Sierra Leone and the alignment of the United Nations joint vision as complementary mechanisms to the implementation of the Agenda for Change. She appealed to Sierra Leone's traditional and non-traditional donors to contribute to the Multi-Donor Trust Fund.

12. Governance and security had significantly improved in Sierra Leone, as evidenced by a number of milestones, including the awarding of the 2008 Africa Peace Award to Sierra Leone; the unity expressed by the leaders of the three main opposition parties at the recent Convention of the ruling All People's Party; and the signing of the joint communiqué. Furthermore, in appointing a variety of key stakeholders to his delegation, the Government of Sierra Leone had demonstrated its willingness to engage with all parties in order to set the country on the path of national reconciliation and lasting peace.

13. **Mr. Schulenburg** (Executive Representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone), referring to the joint communiqué, said that Sierra Leone had set an example for other States in the subregion by taking a unified approach to overcome difficult situations. The joint communiqué itself not only called for dialogue and reconciliation, but emphasized the need for democratic institutions within Sierra Leone and reflected multiparty consensus on effective policies affecting the entire country. He welcomed the initiatives of civil society, such as Voices for Peace, which was an excellent mechanism for bringing the message of peace to young people in Sierra Leone.

14. It was important to honestly assess the extent to which peace and democracy improved the daily lives of the people of Sierra Leone. People who did not feel that they had actively participated in or were directly affected by the peace process must be presented with a message of economic growth in addition to peace. The Government's Agenda for Change was a novel approach in that regard and deserved the Commission's full support.

15. Some 32 different strategies for development by various organizations were currently in place in Sierra Leone. It was of the utmost importance to increase aid efficiency in Sierra Leone; accepting the Agenda for Change as the core strategy document and aligning all international support with that document would contribute to achieving that objective. The Commission should clearly signal that all subsequent strategies would be aligned with the Agenda for Change. Aid coordination was also lacking, but improvement would

be possible only if there was consensus on a single effective strategy.

16. The Security Council had asked the United Nations system to develop a fully integrated peacebuilding strategy for Sierra Leone. That strategy, embodied in the joint vision document, had been adopted by a total of 18 agencies in Sierra Leone. The document expressed clear support for the Government's Agenda for Change, thus signalling the partnership between the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone as well as the commitment of the United Nations system to one core strategic document. The joint vision included a section on the responsibilities to be shared by the Government and the United Nations, with regard to project preparations, approval, monitoring and evaluation.

17. The United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) was the first fully integrated peacebuilding office where the political mandate of the Security Council had been integrated with the various development and humanitarian mandates of the agencies of the United Nations country team. The United Nations joint vision reflected five agreed priority areas and identified the lead and support agencies, Government counterparts, financial requirements and available funding for each of the 21 programmes, which would be carried out by a total of 17 agencies. Benchmarks had been set for all five priority areas to be used in the evaluation process.

18. A Multi-Donor Trust Fund would be established as a single funding mechanism in order to ensure efficiency and coordination. Other agreed mechanisms included joint regional field offices, which would serve as development centres, where United Nations agencies would take the lead, while non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other bilateral and multilateral donors could also participate if they so wished. There was a joint outreach strategy with participation from the Inter-faith Council, the Artists of Peace and other actors.

19. The integrated regional field offices and shared support services would ensure that donors' funds were used more effectively. The total funding requirement for the joint vision was $350 million. About 40 per cent of that sum was already available, which was a good result given the current difficult financial situation. He invited non-traditional donors to participate in the exciting experiment of creating peace, stability and democracy in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone was not a large country but was significant because it had emerged from conflict to hold democratic elections and overcome further outbreaks of violence such as the events of March 2009. The successful completion of peacebuilding efforts in Sierra Leone would serve as an example to other countries of how multilateralism worked.

20. **Mr. Muñoz** (Chile) said that Sierra Leone would need continued support to ensure that the progress made since the end of the civil war in 2002 was sustainable. The joint communiqué adopted by Sierra Leone's political parties reflected the country's determination to end political violence and intolerance and achieve peaceful progress. The two projects most recently approved by the Peacebuilding Fund would contribute to implementation of the joint communiqué by strengthening political dialogue and reconciliation, promoting peace and restoring democratic political institutions.

21. Support programmes for the Agenda for Change should support social development, especially youth employment, in order to strengthen democratic institutions. Support for small, medium and microenterprises would help to reduce unemployment and there should be adequate coordination of the various national and international actors involved.

22. Chile had financed, in the context of the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework, a mission to Sierra Leone in October 2008, which had identified four possible areas for cooperation between the two countries: agro-industry; mining, fishing and tourism; financing for small, medium and microenterprises; management programmes for small enterprises; and youth employment and training programmes.

23. **Mr. Abdelaziz** (Egypt) commended Sierra Leone on the progress made, and especially on the recent efforts to address the consequences of the events of March 2009. The international community should provide all the resources needed for implementation of the joint communiqué, which set out a comprehensive basis for improving inter-party dialogue, strengthening democratic governance and reforming key national institutions.

24. The Peacebuilding Commission and the international community should focus their support for the Sierra Leonean Government on the priorities

outlined in the Agenda for Change, and in the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework. The United Nations joint vision enhanced the United Nations approach to peacebuilding and complemented the Agenda for Change. His delegation supported the establishment of a Multi-Donor Trust Fund to provide resources for the joint vision and endorsed the proposed outcome document of the current special session.

25. **Mr. Majoor** (Netherlands) said that any United Nations peacebuilding effort should be expected to last four to five years and that the key criterion for completion would be whether a country's peacebuilding needs had been sufficiently addressed. Sierra Leone still had significant challenges ahead, including in the areas of good governance and the rule of law, youth employment and efforts to counter drug trafficking. Members of the Commission should support the implementation of the Agenda for Change; they should also support the joint communiqué and the United Nations joint vision for Sierra Leone, both of which complemented the Agenda for Change. The impact of those three documents could spread beyond Sierra Leone and set an example for other countries.

26. The inclusion in the Sierra Leonean delegation of representatives of civil society, opposition parties and the media was testimony to the Government's unity and the prevailing spirit of national cooperation. Members of the Commission should do their utmost to harness whatever expertise and resources they could in support of the Agenda for Change.

27. **Mr. Tiendrébéogo** (Burkina Faso) said that the signing of the joint communiqué on 2 April 2009 reflected the Sierra Leonean Government's steadfast efforts to bring about sustainable peace and reconciliation and he welcomed the financial support provided for its implementation from the emergency window of the Peacebuilding Fund. All Sierra Leonean parties and the international community should ensure its effective implementation.

28. The Agenda for Change clearly reflected the Government's commitment to promoting good political and economic governance, establishing peace and stability and laying a foundation for sustainable development. The Agenda for Change should serve as a reference framework for national and international stakeholders and the donor community's efforts should be aligned with its priorities.

29. UNIPSIL, the Peacebuilding Commission and bilateral and multilateral partners had contributed to significant progress in the field and the United Nations joint vision should be an effective complement to the Agenda for Change. He welcomed the fact that the joint vision aligned the political mandate of UNIPSIL with the activities of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.

30. The international community should focus on the areas identified in the Agenda for Change and the commitments made in the joint communiqué. While his delegation welcomed the important contribution made by the Peacebuilding Fund, it also supported the establishment of a Multi-Donor Trust Fund. Close cooperation and coordination between UNIPSIL, ECOWAS, the Mano River Union, international partners and United Nations missions in the region was essential.

31. **Ms. Hendrie** (United Kingdom) said that the six-monthly review meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission should monitor progress in implementing the Agenda for Change, especially the peacebuilding elements. The Agenda for Change was frank about the challenges facing Sierra Leone but was also a bold statement of intent. To deliver the kind of change that was needed, it had to be underpinned by real and sustained cross-Government ownership and responsibility, effective donor coordination mechanisms and full use of the private sector's potential. National leadership and continued international support would be crucial.

32. She congratulated the President and the main opposition leaders on their leadership in the wake of the March 2009 events and acknowledged the role of the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General in marshalling the international community's response. The Peacebuilding Commission should monitor progress in implementing the commitments set out in the joint communiqué.

33. The events of March 2009 should serve as a wake up call for donors to work together, harmonize their approaches and disburse their commitments effectively. Members of the Peacebuilding Commission should use their individual and collective resources to galvanize additional support.

34. Donors needed straightforward mechanisms for channelling their support, especially if they had no permanent presence in Sierra Leone. The new Multi-Donor Trust Fund was one way to give them

confidence that their money would be well-managed and disbursed. Other options were also being considered and would be presented at the Consultative Group meeting in London in November 2009. That meeting, together with the trade and investment event on the previous day, offered an opportunity to capitalize on the momentum generated by the high-level special session and the launch of the Agenda for Change, the joint vision and the Multi-Donor Trust Fund.

35. She commended UNIPSIL and the United Nations system on the efforts to move towards an integrated peacebuilding office. The challenge would be to integrate different practices and approaches behind one vision. The aims of the joint vision could only be achieved with the full support of the largest organizations involved, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund. Her delegation fully supported the outcome document of the current session.

36. **Mr. Wolfe** (Jamaica), speaking on behalf of the member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that were members of the Peacebuilding Commission, noted that recent events had threatened the tremendous gains made since the end of Sierra Leone's civil war. The Commission should continue its engagement with the country in order to tackle youth unemployment, corruption and drug trafficking.

37. The successes achieved in many parts of Sierra Leone should be replicated throughout the country. National ownership of the peacebuilding process was an essential component in the Government's strategy to address the root causes of the conflict and sustained involvement of the international community was needed to provide financial, technical and other support.

38. His delegation welcomed the adoption of the joint communiqué and the spirit of reconciliation and mutual accommodation which had prevailed during the bi-party talks. The joint communiqué created an appropriate platform for the Government's Agenda for Change, which gave priority to key areas such as agriculture, energy and road infrastructure, areas which were pivotal for revamping the economy and creating jobs.

39. The United Nations joint vision for Sierra Leone defined common priorities for programmes and projects and also served as a planning mechanism for a coordinated United Nations assistance strategy. All Member States should contribute to the Multi-Donor Trust Fund established in support of the joint vision. With cooperation from the Government, political parties, subregional partners and other international actors, Sierra Leone would successfully address the many challenges it faced in its efforts to maintain peace, security and sustainable development.

40. **Mr. Loulichki** (Morocco) said that the commitment of the entire people of Sierra Leone to the continuing success of the peacebuilding process was a sure foundation for sustainable peace, stability and development and justified the renewed support of the international community, having regard also to the evolving role of the United Nations in that regard. The recent unrest had revealed not only the fragility of the process, but also indeed the country's capacity to overcome internal political differences and stay on track towards democracy and national unity, as reflected in the Joint Communiqué.

41. The Agenda for Change was an integrated peacebuilding strategy, combining the priorities of peace and security with those of development, and marked the transition from a period of conflict to one of economic growth, based on effective partnerships. However, for it to succeed, international support was required, particularly for institutional capacity-building, with a view to addressing the persistent challenges presented by youth unemployment and drug trafficking.

42. The joint vision could be said to be the modus operandi of the Agenda for Change and offered the country a framework for cooperation aligned with national priorities, for which the Multi-Donor Trust Fund should provide financing. Morocco, which had long contributed to international peacekeeping efforts in the Mano River region, fully supported the efforts of the people and Government of Sierra Leone to achieve lasting peace, stability and sustainable economic growth; it had also contributed technical assistance to the country in the areas of electrification and solar energy development; and it remained committed to the further development of its cooperation in every area where it had accumulated expertise.

43. **Mr. Örnéus** (Sweden) commended Sierra Leone on adopting the Joint Communiqué, which had put an end to violence and charted the way forward to democratic and peaceful development. His country

stood ready, through the Peacebuilding Commission, to assist in its implementation. Sweden fully supported the Agenda for Change, as well as the Commission's decision to align its engagement in Sierra Leone with that strategy, which was also the basis of the Swedish strategy for development cooperation with the country. He also welcomed the integration of the political mandate of the United Nations with its various development mandates, as reflected in the New Vision, which embodied a new and exemplary approach to peacebuilding. Sweden's cooperation with Sierra Leone for the coming five years would amount to nearly 200 million Swedish crowns.

44. **Mr. Palouš** (Czech Republic), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that while much had been done by the Government and people of Sierra Leone to build peace, the task ahead remained immense. Additional efforts were needed to consolidate the rule of law, strengthen State institutions and build the capacity of the police and army. The European Union therefore believed that sustained international support was still required in the country, in particular through the Peacekeeping Commission; that support should be aligned with the priorities contained in the Agenda for Change. Moreover, the European Union was convinced that the innovative approach to peacebuilding and fundraising presented in the Joint Vision for Sierra Leone would bring significant improvements and faster results, in terms of both stabilization and development. It supported the close ties between UNIPSIL and other United Nations agencies, programmes and funds in the country, and also the assumption by UNIPSIL of more regular development tasks.

45. The political leaders of Sierra Leone had offered a great example to all countries beset by internal strife. The European Union considered that all the ongoing efforts towards reconciliation and dialogue were the only way of strengthening stability and ensuring prosperity in the country and appealed for the full implementation of the joint communiqué.

46. **Mr. Sebregondi** (European Commission) urged the further development of the Agenda for Change into sector policies as a means of attracting more funds from donors and enhancing the sector policy dialogue. The European Commission, as the major multilateral donor in the country, where it was engaged in a €250 million country programme, would continue to support Sierra Leone, in particular by helping to put sector policies in place; it looked forward to developing even closer synergies between its own joint country strategy, following its upcoming mid-term review, and the Agenda for Change. Regular reviews were a useful tool for assessing the progress of all stakeholders in addressing peacebuilding challenges; in that context, the European Commission would welcome clear governance commitments from the Government, which would enhance the possibility of achieving good results at the upcoming Consultative Group meeting.

47. Sierra Leone should build on the achievement of the Joint Vision. It should play a leading role in donor coordination, by establishing a viable mechanism for that purpose, which would help to ensure the success of the development agenda, including budget support, and broaden the donor base. He appealed to all members of the Peacebuilding Commission to join existing donors and hoped that the upcoming Consultative Group meeting would be a milestone in that respect.

48. The European Commission considered budget support to be a key aid modality and was cooperating closely with the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund to develop a common approach to such support in situations of fragility, with special attention to continuity and predictability. It had launched a pilot exercise with six countries, including Sierra Leone, whose results would be fed into a European Union implementation plan on fragile situations, to be presented in late 2009.

49. **Mr. Sow** (Guinea) commended Sierra Leone on its considerable achievements in building peace and developing security, democracy and good governance, particularly in the wake of a decade of civil war; they gave hope of stability and all-round progress throughout the Mano River region. Thanks to the political vision of its President and the patriotism and political maturity of all the stakeholders, Sierra Leone had laid the foundations for harmonious development, based on dialogue and national reconciliation. He called on its development partners to maintain and intensify their efforts on the ground to build on the progress achieved, eradicate the root causes of the conflict and meet the challenges still facing the peacebuilding process.

50. Guinea welcomed the official launching of the second Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and the alignment of the United Nations family with that

Agenda for Change, through the adoption of the Joint Vision document. He called on the international community to give every possible support to the Government's proposals endorsed in the Joint Vision, in particular by expanding the international coalition to promote peacebuilding programmes and mechanisms, including the United Nations Multi-Donor Trust Fund.

51. **Ms. Jahan** (Bangladesh) said that her country welcomed the Agenda for Change as a single strategy document incorporating the principle of national ownership; it offered the international community a useful basis for its engagement with Sierra Leone. The priorities it highlighted were also reflected in the Peacekeeping Cooperation Framework adopted jointly by the Government of Sierra Leone and the Peacebuilding Commission in December 2007. Bangladesh felt, however, that greater importance should be given to the empowerment of women and to the involvement of civil society and NGOs in development activities at the local level. She offered to share her country's best practices in that regard with Sierra Leone, including its experience with micro-credit to combat poverty and with cooperative arrangements for agriculture development, for example, which could be invaluable in creating jobs, notably for young ex-combatants. Her country had contributed troops to United Nations peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone and had thus formed strong ties with the people of that country and would make every effort to promote their well-being.

52. **Mr. Sumi** (Japan) said that his country supported both the Joint Communiqué and the Agenda for Change, which was a guideline for the development of Sierra Leone and set out priorities for which Japan had been providing assistance. His Government was currently finalizing a 15-year-long master plan on power supply as part of its efforts to promote the consolidation of peace through economic growth; it looked forward to sharing that plan with development partners. Japan was also currently funding measures to combat malaria in Sierra Leone; it would continue to provide food aid to the country, as it had been doing since 2005; it had contributed to efforts to eradicate youth unemployment in the Mano River region; and it supported Sierra Leone's administrative reform, including its anti-corruption programmes. Looking ahead to future discussions on aid policy, he said that due consideration should be given to requests from Sierra Leone for general budget support or direct budget support within sector-wide approaches, in the light particularly of absorption capacity, aid effectiveness and the volume of available resources.

53. **Mr. Kulyk** (World Bank) said that the World Bank, together with other development partners, was contributing to the implementation of the Agenda for Change. Over the previous three years, it had committed over $100 million in projects relating to transport, private sector development, delivery of basic services, public sector reform and capacity-building. It was currently discussing the new country assistance strategy for Sierra Leone for the next three years; the strategy would be closely aligned with the Joint Vision document and funding would be based on the country's performance indicators. The Bank was ready to co-chair and work with all participants in the upcoming Consultative Group meeting, which he hoped would raise the additional resources needed to implement the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

54. **Mr. Dowling** (Ireland) said that the special solidarity that existed between Ireland and Sierra Leone, as two small countries with similarly-sized populations, had been reinforced by their shared vision of a fair and equal global society. The support of Ireland and of all partners was more important than ever, as Sierra Leone moved from a post-conflict situation to one of development. During that transition, the continued focus on peacebuilding was the key to long-term stability and required the ongoing support of all development partners, as well as national and international stakeholders. He therefore welcomed the efforts being made by the Peacebuilding Commission, in particular, to broaden the scope of the country's partnership base. It was also important to promote communication across party boundaries and reinforce inclusion and tolerance at the national level. Ireland welcomed the signing of the Joint Communiqué as a step in that direction, which needed to be built upon in order to ensure that the rights of ordinary citizens were protected and the capacity and neutrality of State institutions were reinforced. It likewise welcomed the Agenda for Change and undertook to align all its future support accordingly.

55. **Ms. Dunlop** (Brazil) said that the Peacebuilding Commission had been instrumental in providing support to Sierra Leone which had made significant progress in respect of the rule of law, human rights, justice and security, while seeking to preserve micro-economic stability and promote economic growth. The

situation remained fragile, however, as illustrated by the recent violence, which had highlighted the need to consolidate political stability and democratic governance in the country. Poverty was a deep concern as were the related challenges of youth unemployment and drug trafficking. She was confident that the Government would rise to those challenges, with the support of the international community and the Peacebuilding Commission. The Agenda for Change provided Sierra Leone with a basis for engagement with international partners and identified priorities for the country's socio-economic development, which was a precondition for lasting peace. Peacebuilding was a multidimensional undertaking that required coherent and coordinated action by all the major players.

56. **Mr. Sammis** (United States of America) said that intensive collaboration between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Government and civil society of Sierra Leone had led to an integrated peacebuilding strategy that had helped to shape the work of the United Nations and donors on the ground. That collaboration had also been instrumental in attracting new donors and drawing international attention to the need to support regional organizations such ECOWAS and the Mano River Union in addressing common threats to stability throughout West Africa. The challenge before the Peacebuilding Commission was to remain relevant and helpful to Sierra Leone as the Government sought to address the long-term causes of instability through its Agenda for Change and as circumstances changed. It must be borne in mind that Sierra Leone remained a fragile State, susceptible to exogenous shocks and vulnerable to swings in fuel and food prices.

57. His country agreed with the priorities identified by the Government and had in the previous year provided Sierra Leone with $35 million in assistance. The United States hoped that, in the coming months, the Peacekeeping Commission would enlist increased international support for those priorities, in particular by raising awareness of the upcoming Consultative Group meeting among potential donors, including non-traditional donors and strengthening the capacity of ECOWAS and other regional institutions to assist national efforts.

58. He suggested that in the coming year the Peacebuilding Commission should reorient its efforts so as to make Sierra Leone the driver of the peacebuilding process, with itself in a supportive role, providing expertise and international best practices as needed; facilitate national dialogue and seek to ensure that the needs and contribution of rural communities were fully taken into account; emphasize the importance of combating violence against women and children; and seek to identify gaps in national and international efforts to achieve lasting progress in implementing the Agenda for Change.

59. **Mr. Lobo de Mesquita** (Portugal) said that his country, the most recent member of the configuration, had special historical links with Sierra Leone, West Africa and the entire continent. Since youth unemployment, drug trafficking and organized crime affected not only Sierra Leone but the whole region, any assistance provided by the international community should take the regional dimension into account.

60. **Mr. Ney** (Germany) welcomed the progress achieved by Sierra Leone, especially in the area of democratization, as demonstrated by the peaceful and democratic elections held in 2007. Germany, together with its European Union and other partners, would continue its support in line with the priorities set by the Sierra Leonean Government. The bulk of Germany's bilateral assistance of over $3 million in 2009 had been earmarked for employment and youth empowerment programmes, infrastructure rehabilitation, rural development, natural resources management, health and the rule of law. The implementation of the Agenda for Change required broad support of all political parties and civil society groups in Sierra Leone. The joint communiqué had been an important milestone, followed by many other steps towards reconciliation and dialogue. UNIPSIL had played a supportive role in that process.

61. **Mr. Long** Zhou (China) said that China supported the Sierra Leone Government's Agenda for Change. While the country had made remarkable strides in the political and social spheres, poor economic development, an unstable food supply and rampant drug trafficking could undermine progress. China believed that increased economic and social development assistance to Sierra Leone should improve well-being and enhance social stability through employment, the food supply and health care and hoped that the Peacebuilding Fund, as well as multilateral and bilateral partners, would focus on consolidating Sierra Leone's peacebuilding achievements.

62. **Mr. Crowley** (South Africa) said that his delegation welcomed the joint communiqué and the vision reflected therein. It proved that the political leadership had risen above narrow political interests and had put national interests first. As reflected in the composition of the Sierra Leonean delegation, the joint communiqué set forth a multiparty consensual and consultative approach to important national institutions and policies.

63. The Agenda for Change — based on the principles of national ownership as well as sustained and mutual accountability — could boost economic recovery while strengthening key institutions. It was therefore important that the international community — bilateral donors, the Peacebuilding Commission, United Nations agencies and programmes and UNIPSIL — should align its efforts and engagements with the priorities and programmes outlined by the Government of Sierra Leone in its Agenda for Change. In that regard, South Africa's rehabilitation of the electricity supply in Freetown and its training of doctors would create infrastructure to attract private sector development and develop human resources necessary for enhanced social delivery.

64. His delegation welcomed the establishment of the Multi-Donor Trust Fund to support the United Nations joint vision for Sierra Leone and to enlarge and diversify the donor base and supported the joint vision as a welcome approach for United Nations involvement in post-conflict countries.

65. **Mr. Cornado** (Italy) said that attendance at the meeting demonstrated the growing relevance of the Peacebuilding Commission as a bridge between national and international stakeholders. Italy was encouraged by the main parties' commitment to take steps towards the establishment of a prosperous and democratic Sierra Leone. The importance of the role that the Executive Representative was playing to restore normality could not be overemphasized.

66. Sierra Leone remained a success story and a model of transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. Italy's contribution was aligned with President Koroma's priorities. His Government had not only disbursed approximately €120 million towards the financing of the Bumbuna dam, which was critical to Sierra Leone's sustainable development, but had also cancelled all bilateral debt, worth approximately €41 million. Italy expected results in all the priority sectors, endorsed the idea of monitoring progress and fully supported the session's outcome document (PBC/3/SLE/L.2).

67. **Mr. Mikkelsen** (International Monetary Fund (IMF)) said that an IMF mission had discussed the fourth review under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility arrangement and had reached understandings on policies that would permit completion of the review. The total commitment, approximately $62 million, could be increased to about $77 million should the Government's request be approved and the review completed. IMF disbursement to the country in 2009 would total approximately $36 million. Sierra Leone would also benefit from the 250 billion SDR allocation proposed by the G-20 leaders in April 2009.

68. The economy had been badly affected by the global downturn. Mining, the main export sector, had been hit particularly hard by declining demand, prices and scaled back production. After falling about 13 per cent in 2008, total exports were projected to drop an additional 27 per cent in 2009. Services and construction had also been affected. However, the improved electricity supply, increased agricultural productivity and lower oil prices should boost overall output. Real GDP growth was projected to slow to 4 per cent in 2009 and 2010 from about 5.5 per cent in 2008 and to gradually recover to 6 per cent in 2012.

69. The economic environment had challenged fiscal policies. Domestic revenue was projected to decline to 11 per cent of GDP in 2009. There had also been delays in policy implementation. Furthermore, the revenue shortfall would have to be accommodated by additional external budget support, additional domestic financing and a small reduction in non-priority current spending. Continued support from multilateral and bilateral donors would be vital in order to achieve fiscal targets and prevent cuts in priority poverty-reducing spending. The new Poverty Reduction Strategy would need increased fiscal space. The Strategy rightly focused on investment in infrastructure and human capital and its implementation would be vital to sustainable economic growth in Sierra Leone. IMF would remain engaged in Sierra Leone, providing policy advice and financial and technical assistance in collaboration with other development partners. Its work would continue to focus on financial sector reforms, tax administration, tax policy and public financial management.

70. **Mr. Olinger** (Luxembourg) said that Luxembourg welcomed the Agenda for Change and because of the economic and financial crisis, encouraged the Government to further pave the way for an investment-friendly environment. He welcomed the establishment by the Government of an Office of Diaspora Affairs and the recent private sector development strategy, which should create employment. He supported the youth empowerment and employment scheme and the appointment of a Government youth commissioner to support employment programmes. He encouraged the Government to further implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, including ensuring public participation in the constitutional review process; promote human rights, good governance and the rule of law; and combat corruption. It was important to involve all stakeholders, including civil society, in order to ensure national ownership of the peace process. He stressed the need for cooperation with regional and subregional organizations such as ECOWAS in combating organized crime and drug trafficking, and for close collaboration with other international and regional financial institutions.

71. **Mr. Normandin** (Canada) commended Sierra Leone's political leaders and civil society on their efforts to establish lasting peace. The special session and the upcoming Consultative Group meeting offered an opportunity for all to align their peacebuilding support efforts with the Government of Sierra Leone's own strategy, the Agenda for Change. Canada was committed to a strong United Nations peacebuilding architecture and would continue to support a pragmatic and flexible approach by the Commission, so it would deliver tangible results such as the outcome document (PBC/3/SLE/L.2). Canada welcomed the Agenda for Change, which had a robust monitoring and evaluation framework. Its strong baselines, indicators and benchmarks would help to demonstrate progress to the people of Sierra Leone and identify areas that required increased efforts. Canada had been providing funding and support in many ways to Sierra Leone for several years. Its major focus had been the Special Court for Sierra Leone to which it had provided over $16 million. The Court's work thus far, including the recent conviction of three key actors in the civil war, had sent strong signals of accountability throughout the world.

72. **Ms. Chaimongkol** (Thailand) said Thailand believed that both security and economic challenges had to be addressed simultaneously and given equal weight. Thailand commended the work of the United Nations system. It supported the joint vision for Sierra Leone and the establishment of the United Nations Multi-Donor Trust Fund, which were all vital to strengthening Sierra Leone's capacity to serve its people in the long run. She urged Sierra Leone to build a strong economy on its rich natural resource base to address the issue of food security, give the country an economic jump start and promote sustainable peace and development.

73. **Mr. Iqbal** (Pakistan), noting Sierra Leone's efforts since the civil war to improve its socio-economical profile through peace, the rule of law and democracy, said that Pakistan welcomed and fully supported the Agenda for Change, the second Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper for Sierra Leone launched by President Koroma and the joint vision. The outbreak of political violence had revealed the inherent fragility of the peace process and Pakistan sincerely hoped that the joint communiqué could provide firm foundations for a lasting peace.

74. *Ms. Bangura (Sierra Leone), Co-Chairperson, took the Chair.*

75. **Mr. Emmanuel Tommy** (Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP)) acknowledged the role played by Ambassador Frank Majoor and the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General. The All People's Congress Party (APC) and SLPP had agreed in a spirit of reconciliation to build and sustain the relative peace in Sierra Leone. The communiqué they had issued in the wake of the March 2009 disturbances ensured that their supporters would be held accountable and that disruptions of the peace would be avoided. SLPP had worked closely with the ruling party to address the root causes of the hostilities. Sexual violence and other atrocities must be thoroughly investigated. His party fully endorsed the Agenda for Change and the joint vision for Sierra Leone and called on all partners and friends of Sierra Leone to help to monitor its implementation in order to ensure transparency and accountability. SLPP remained committed to peace.

76. **Mr. Davis Tam Baryoh** (Chief Executive Officer, Citizen's Radio), speaking on behalf of civil society, said that sections critical of the Government,

such as the media and artists, had been part of the peace process since the end of hostilities. One thing that had united the country was the furtherance of peace for all Sierra Leoneans. As the international community invested in the process, civil society and the media would watch relations between the political parties closely. Thus far, the two major parties had committed themselves to peace, which civil society and the critical media welcomed. He would therefore join the people and the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone in encouraging the United Nations system and all their friends to help the peace process.

77. **Mr. Richard Konteh** (Deputy Minister of Finance, Sierra Leone) said that Sierra Leone had pursued economic growth and reduced poverty levels. The IMF Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility was broadly on track. The Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Fund Priority Plan had an emergency window for quick disbursements to respond to potential threats and the Secretary-General had announced a Peacebuilding Fund country envelope of $35 million to fund priority areas.

78. Most of the seven projects that had been approved between May and July of 2007, and that were being implemented through UNDP, had been completed and about $15.9 million had been disbursed for that activity, about 46.6 per cent of the total envelope. The overall delivery for that first batch of projects stood at 78 per cent. On 15 July 2008, seven additional projects, worth $16.7 million, had been approved by the steering committee. They included support for the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendation on reparations, support to reform and living conditions in prisons, the Anti-Corruption Commission, women and children's empowerment, peacebuilding, emergency support to energy, support to the Office of National Security and to Government oversight. Overall, project delivery stood at 72 per cent. On 3 June 2009, another six projects had been approved worth $2.1 million. That raised the commitment rate for the Peacebuilding Fund to over 99 per cent. The Government was committed to high levels of integrity and transparency and accountability in the disbursement of resources.

79. Effective and efficient aid coordination was key to success and to ensuring synergy, avoiding duplication and waste. He called upon all partners to support the Government in its efforts to enhance aid coordination.

80. *Mr. McNee resumed the Chair.*

81. **Ms. Njovana** (United Nations Development F for Women), speaking on behalf of the United Nati country team in Sierra Leone, said that the joint vis for Sierra Leone had been guided by the Governme Agenda for Change. Synergy and communicati among members of the country team had b enhanced in order to make the best use of comparative advantages of the different agencies.

82. **The Chairperson**, noting that the session been particularly rich and coherent, drew attentio the proposed outcome document of the special sess as contained in document PBC/3/SLE/L.2 and too that members wished to adopt it.

83. *It was so decided.*

84. **The Chairperson** declared the meeting adjourne

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.